

What is claimed is:

1. A system comprising:

a plurality of portable cards;

a first computer network including a first plurality of computers, each having a respective first network address, the plurality of first computers including a first computer having means for sending a first signal including a first network address, an inter-network address corresponding to a computer on another network, and a signal corresponding to a product;

a second computer network including a second plurality of computers, each having a respective second network address;

means, responsive to the inter-network address from the first signal, for sending a second signal including a second network address and the signal corresponding to the product; and

means, responsive to the signal corresponding to the product from the second signal, for sending a card signal, to a portable card in the plurality of cards; and

means, spatially removed from the previous means, for reading the card signal from the portable card.

2. The system of claim 1 wherein the first network address is O1 digits removed from the start of the first signal, the second network address is O2 digits removed from the start of the second signal, wherein O1 is not equal to O2.

3. The system of claim 1 wherein the first network address includes N1 digits and the second network includes N2 digits, wherein N1 is not equal to N2.

4. The system of claims 1 further including
means for receiving a purchase signal corresponding to a product; and
means for determining a price for the product depending on whether the product
identified by the card signal, read by the reading means, corresponds to the product identified by
the purchase signal.

5. The system of claim 4 further including
an electromagnetic detector for generating the purchase signal.

6. The system of claim 4 further including
a bar code reader for generating the purchase signal.

7. A system comprising:
a plurality of portable cards;
a store including a plurality of products and means for reading a card signal from one of
the portable cards;
a first computer network including a first plurality of computers, each having a respective
first network address, the plurality of first computers including a first computer having means for
sending a first signal including a first network address, an inter-network address corresponding to
a computer on another network, and a signal corresponding to a product in the plurality of
products;

a second computer network including a second plurality of computers, each having a respective second network address;

means, responsive to the inter-network address from the first signal, for sending a second signal including a second network address and the signal corresponding to the product; and

means, responsive to the signal corresponding to the product from the second signal, for sending a card signal, to a portable card in the plurality of cards.

8. In a system including a plurality of portable cards; a first computer network including a first plurality of computers, each having a respective first network address, the plurality of first computers including a first computer; a second computer network including a second plurality of computers, each having a respective second network address, a method of operating the system comprising the step, performed by the first computer, of

sending a first signal including a first network address, an inter-network address corresponding to a computer on another network, and a signal corresponding to a product, and

wherein the method further comprises the step of

sending, responsive to the inter-network address from the first signal, a second signal including a second network address and the signal corresponding to the product; and

sending a card signal, responsive to the signal corresponding to the product from the second signal, to a portable card in the plurality of cards; and

reading the card signal from the portable card.

9. The method of claim 8 wherein the step of sending a first signal includes the step of

constructing a signal having the first network address O1 digits removed from the start of the first signal, and
the step of sending a second signal includes the step of constructing a signal having the second network address O2 digits removed from the start of the second signal, wherein O1 is not equal to O2.

10. The method of claim 8 wherein the step of sending a first signal includes the step of constructing a signal with the first network address including N1 digits, and
the step of sending a second signal includes the step of constructing a signal with the second network including N2 digits, wherein N1 is not equal to N2.

11. The method of claim 8 further including the step of
receiving a purchase signal corresponding to a product; and
determining a price for the product depending on whether the product identified by the card signal, read by the reading means, corresponds to the product identified by the purchase signal.

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